

Re: Kev Ling

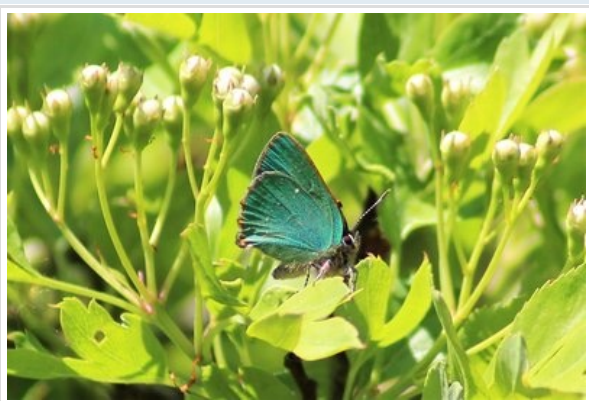
by kevlng, 07-May-18 09:38 PM GMT

7th May 2018:

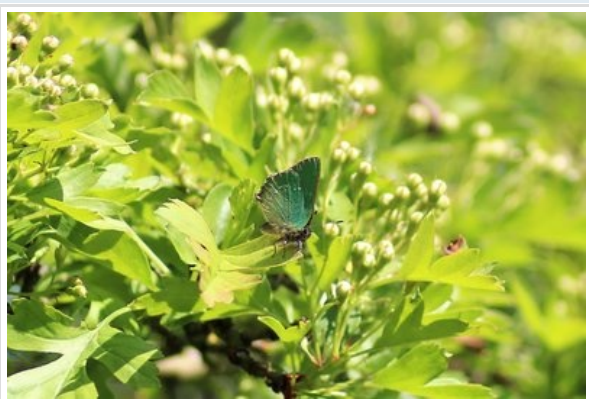
Working with my colleagues at the Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation today. Our first event of the season was at my local patch of Kiln Meadow in Ipswich. Our target species for our guided walk was the Green Hairstreak.

We were not disappointed and had continuous sightings all day on the Hawthorn planted rides and we were even treated to a female ovipositing on Bird's Foot Trefoil (something I had not witnessed before).

In all we saw ten species and a couple of Orange Tip eggs for good measure.



Kind Regards
Kev



Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 08-May-18 07:15 AM GMT

kevlng wrote:

...we were even treated to a female ovipositing on Bird's Foot Trefoil (something I had not witnessed before).

Nor me, Kev. I've regularly seen them pottering around various vetches but never laying on them.

Re: Kev Ling

by trevor, 08-May-18 07:55 AM GMT

Lovely image, Kev. Not an easy Butterfly to photograph satisfactorily .
How that green varies with the lighting conditions.

Trevor.

Re: Kev Ling

by Goldie M, 08-May-18 08:45 AM GMT

Lovely Butterfly shots, it's surprising how their colour can change with the Sun Kev, 😊 Goldie 😊

Re: Kev Ling

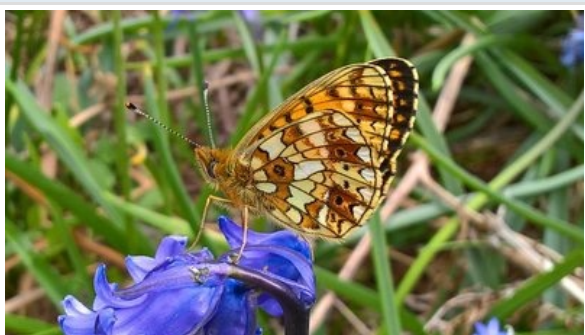
by kevlng, 03-Jun-18 08:34 PM GMT

28th May 2018

One of the things I like most about chasing Butterflies, is the moment when something totally unexpected happens and you see a species you never thought you would.

This was certainly the case this week during my holiday to Snowdonia. I have climbed Snowdon on several occasions and have seen some of the more common species on it's lower slopes.

This week I was walking the Watkin Path from Nant Gwynant. As I descended, a flash of orange fluttered by and came to rest on some bluebells by the side of the path. With camera hastily retrieved from my rucksack, I approach to find a freshly emerged Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary. This is the first SPBF I have seen in several years and just so you know, I am still smiling as I write this.





Kind Regards
Kev



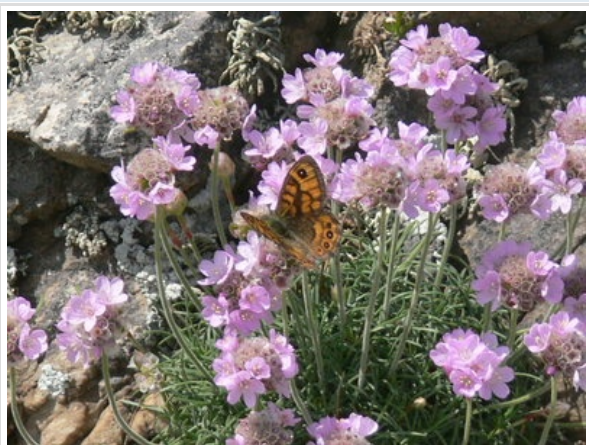
Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 04-Jun-18 08:46 PM GMT

31st May 2018

After a couple of days hiking in the mountains and my surprise encounter with a SPBF, the family headed to the west coast of Anglesey and it's stunning beaches. Our favourite spot is Porth Trecastell and the walk along the sand dunes to Rhosneigr. The target species for me was the Wall and as we took the cliff top path we counted a total of four. They were very active and settle very seldom, which posed difficulties with photographs. However they were fun to observe and I did manage one or two aerial shots as well as a couple on the rocks.





The walk to the sand dunes at Rhosneigr is about a mile and along this stretch of coastline there were large number of Small Heath (+100). For a species that is showing a sad decline nationally, it was a pleasure to see them in such large numbers and for me a rare chance to get close to one for a decent photo (this being a species that seems to have an allergy to my camera 😊).



The other abundant species on this walk was Common Blue, with over 50 seen (all male). The habitat around the sand dunes is heavily covered with Common Bird's Foot Trefoil, making it an ideal location for the Common Blue. As we returned to the car, I had my first Painted Lady of the year. Always a pleasure.



Kind Regards
Kev Ling

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 04-Jun-18 11:08 PM GMT

What a cracking find Kev – Small Pearls are always great to see but an unexpected one is even better 😊🍷 Great set of Walls to follow up as well – is one of them an aberrant (shot 3), the 'eye' looks odd shaped? 😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by ernie f, 05-Jun-18 09:12 AM GMT

Kev. Finding and getting pics of Wall Browns would be a good enough ambition for me – not one that is likely to be fulfilled in my neck of the woods. But you have them flying over cliffs! I think the one you have taken with the sea in the background is fantastic.

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 05-Jun-18 12:05 PM GMT

You're right, Kev, finding the unexpected is one of the joys of this hobby – and that was a cracker of a SPBF to boot! Great coastal Walls as well. 😊

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 05-Jun-18 10:46 PM GMT

kevling wrote:

The target species for me was the Wall and as we took the cliff top path we counted a total of four. They were very active and settle very seldom, which posed difficulties with photographs. However they were fun to observe and I did manage one or two aerial shots as well as a couple on the rocks.

Absolutely, Kev. Wall Browns are marvellous to watch. Their flight pattern is the very definition of carefree happiness, and it's such a shame that they are largely confined to coastal districts these days.

I could watch them for hours on end and never get bored.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 06-Jun-18 09:08 PM GMT

Thanks for the nice comments gents.

Wurzel: I hadn't considered a possible aberrant. You have got a keener eye for detail than me for sure 😊

Ernie: They are a species that you sometimes have to travel for, but I hope you succeed soon. I was pleasantly surprised by the photo with the sea background. Right place at the right time 😊

Dave: That SPBF was a gem, it must only have been a day old, it looked pristine 😊

David: I agree with you how fun they are to watch. I did have an unexpected inland sighting last year, a colony on top of Mam Tor in Derbyshire 😊

Slightly out of date sequence, but just prior to my holiday in Snowdonia, I continued to get my fill of Green Hairstreaks that were still putting in a strong show in Suffolk. Here is the best of the rest.



Kind Regards Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 06-Jun-18 11:23 PM GMT

Great to see such a colour range on those Greenstreaks Kev 😊
Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 09-Jun-18 01:33 PM GMT

Green Hairstreaks DO seem to be having a good year. There are still plenty of them on my patch in south Wales.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 10-Jun-18 01:41 PM GMT

I have had a busy winter helping Suffolk Butterfly Conservation with our Brimstone & Buckthorns project. Celebrating it's 20th anniversary this year, we delivered and planted a further 600 Alder & Common Buckthorn whips to interested parties throughout the county. Making a total of 5000 in total over the 20 years.

I kept a couple of Alder back for myself and planted them in my garden, not expecting anything in the first year. How wrong could I be. When I returned from holiday recently, one whip was being massacred by 18 Brimstone larva. The majority were re-housed to mature bushes in order to preserve their survival, however we kept a couple and yesterday were rewarded with finding one that had freshly pupated. Here it is in different forms of development.



Kind Regards
Kev Ling

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 11-Jun-18 09:25 AM GMT

That caterpillar has some really powerful looking legs/prolegs – it looks like the Stuart Pearce of caterpillars 😲😄

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 12-Jun-18 10:31 PM GMT

Lovely shots, Kev. I don't suppose you may be on hand when the adult emerges? 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 24-Jun-18 08:52 PM GMT

17th June 2018 Purdis Heath - Ipswich

The habitat at this fine heathland site has been managed by volunteers of the Suffolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation for several years. At the start there was just a single sighting, but on my visit today numbers were in their mid twenties with the peak emergence still to come. It included this nice looking female.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 24-Jun-18 09:00 PM GMT

22nd June 2018 - Wherstead & Old Hall Wood - Ipswich

Having seen early sightings in people's personal diaries, i visited my local woods today on the hunt for newly emerged White Admirals. I did not see any at Wherstead Wood last year and feared for this small colony, so I was glad to get an immediate sighting on this sunny morning. I'm sure numbers will increase in the coming days.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by ernie f, 25-Jun-18 07:53 AM GMT

Nice to hear the White Ads are coming along in your neck of the woods, Kev. Hoping we get a bumper crop this year.

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 28-Jun-18 09:43 AM GMT

I'd heard quite a bit about the Purdis Heath site, Kev, and all the good work that's gone into its management.

Nice to see this paying dividends.

Re: Kev Ling

by millerd, 28-Jun-18 10:06 AM GMT

A nice couple of White Admiral shots in their favourite poses on the brambles, Kev. 😊 We don't see many reports from that part of the country so it's good to see what's there.

Dave

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 29-Jun-18 08:44 PM GMT

Lovely White Admirals Kev, you've got them just right as the even darker markings are showing up on the dark ground colour 😊🌱

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 03-Jul-18 07:32 AM GMT

Ernie, David, Dave, Wurzel: Thanks for your kind replies 😊s

23rd June 2018

Next target species for me this summer was the Marbled White, a species that I had very few photographs of in my collection. An early morning walk paid dividends and they were not as active in the heat as they normally are, allowing me some protracted and rewarding observations.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 03-Jul-18 10:11 PM GMT

Beautiful golden glow on those Marbled Whites Kev 😊👍

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by bugboy, 04-Jul-18 09:40 AM GMT

Those images are so evocative of high summer, great shots.

Re: Kev Ling

by Andrew555, 04-Jul-18 10:05 AM GMT

Great selection Kev, I really like your clifftop Walls. 😊

Re: Kev Ling

by Steve L, 06-Jul-18 01:16 PM GMT

Hi Kev

Great set of Marbled Whites, and the Large Skipper photo bomber. This is a species that's on the increase in my area, there's something about a black and white creature.

Cheers

Steve

Re: Kev Ling

by Pauline, 06-Jul-18 06:20 PM GMT

Hi Kev - 'fraid I missed your post about the Brimstone project so apologies for late comment. Incredibly interesting and worthwhile. This season I have been trying to follow their development in the wild and had some success until it came to looking for the pupa. I know they are very well camouflaged and was prepared for that but couldn't find a single one. I'd love to see one so perhaps I should invest in some Alder.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlng, 07-Jul-18 11:14 AM GMT

Thanks for the lovely comments everyone 😊

Pauline: I would certainly invest in some Alder or Common Buckthorn, if my first year results are anything to go by.

Steve: Like you, I love the colours of the Marbled White. I also love the Black Veined White for the same reason.

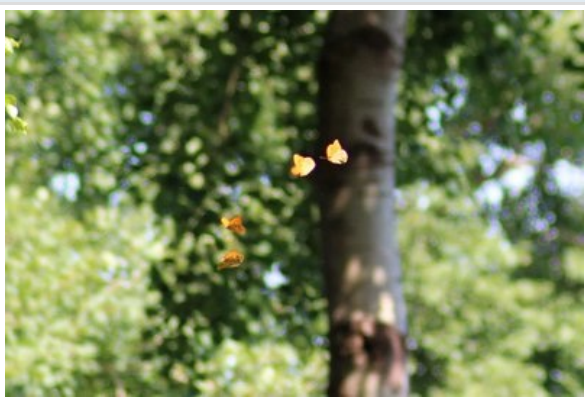
Andrew: The clifftop Walls were a nice surprise for me.

Bugboy/Wurzel: I tried to get out early morning before the sun got too high and was pleased with the results.

4th July - Bonny Wood, Suffolk

Next on my wish list for the summer was the Silver Washed Fritillary. I love this butterfly and this wood is only a very short drive from home. My highest tally previously here was 15-20. But today I managed 50, which included 12 females and an *ab Valezina*. Other notable species were Purple Hairstreak and White Admiral, along with the obligatory high numbers of grassland species and large quantities of Whites, some settled in small groups on the duckweed in the pond. The day was capped off with my first ever sighting of a Badger. As I photographed the SWF, I heard a rustle in the grass and a badger passed by me on it's way home after a night out (Time 09:30!). Here are the best of the SWF.





Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 08-Jul-18 07:25 AM GMT

Cracking set of SF shots Kev 🍷🍷 and a great daily tally 🍷 Could the ot weather have led to things emerging all at once hence the higher numbers?

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 08-Jul-18 08:00 AM GMT

Thanks Wurzel. I share your logic about the hot weather influencing a mass emergence, as demonstrated by my encounter on Friday night below 😊

6th July – Rushmere Heath Ipswich

I decided to take an evening dog walk on our local heathland last week. It has a large coverage of Oaks and I noticed good numbers of Purple Hairstreak active in the canopies, an hour or two before sunset. I returned on Friday to do a more thorough count and was astounded by what I saw. There was not a single oak that did not have a Hairstreak, with the average per tree being 5. Some supporting up to 15–20. They were very active, but what I did observe was that as soon as they landed, they immediately opened their wings to bask in the evening warmth of the sun. Unfortunately this always seemed to happen 15 feet up in the canopy, out of range for photographs 😞

However our total count of Purple Hairstreaks ended with a staggering 525!. I would estimate that I barely analysed a quarter of the Oaks on site though , so the actual number would have topped 1000 had bad light not stopped play.

This was a special night and one of those Butterfly encounters that I just stumbled across without any prior knowledge. The best I would say.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 08-Jul-18 08:41 AM GMT

Woah that is a fantastic count 😲😊

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by Steve L, 08-Jul-18 10:52 AM GMT

What an amazing number of Purple Hairstreaks

Love the SWF flight shot

Cheers

Steve

Re: Kev Ling

by bugboy, 08-Jul-18 07:24 PM GMT

The perspective and angle you got with that first male SWF makes it look gargantuan 😲😊 .

That is indeed a very healthy PH count, I reckon I was seeing similar densities at Bookham last week but I didn't need to look up into the canopy, they were all coming down to my level!!!

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 10-Jul-18 09:26 PM GMT

kevlings wrote:

...However our total count of Purple Hairstreaks ended with a staggering 525!. I would estimate that I barely analysed a quarter of the Oaks on site though , so the actual number would have topped 1000 had bad light not stopped play...

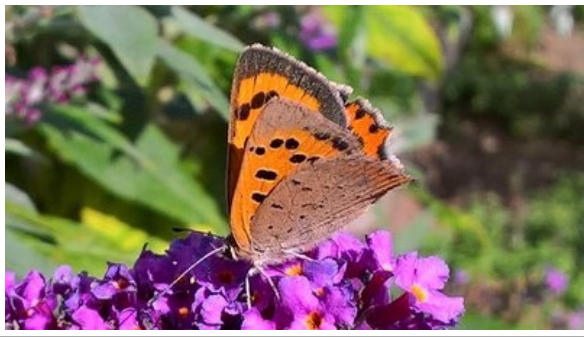
That is one hell of a lot of Hairstreaks, Kev. There are quite a few species about in extraordinary numbers right now. Unless things go pear-shaped soon then this will be the most memorable year for quite some time.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevling, 09-Sep-18 08:51 PM GMT

9th September 2018

After a somewhat disappointing summer with butterflies on our buddleia, I enjoyed the visitor I had this afternoon in the form of a Small Copper ab. *caeruleopunctata*. I really liked the blue dotted markings on the hindwing.



Also today I saw several very fresh Speckled Woods, proving that the Butterfly season is far from over yet. I must say I thought that they were smaller than previous broods I have seen this year, with this one barely larger than a Common Blue.



Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 10-Sep-18 10:19 PM GMT

Well done, Kev. It's not often you see Small Coppers on buddleia. Nice underside image of the Speckled Wood too. That can be tricky to achieve.

Re: Kev Ling

by kevlings, 12-Sep-18 08:03 PM GMT

Thanks David, you're not the first to say that about Small Coopers and Buddleia. Although I have to say we are fortunate to get one or two sightings on ours each year. Shame the same can't be said for Small Tortoiseshell and Painted Lady. Not a single example of each this in 2018. The first year ever 😞

Kind Regards
Kev

Re: Kev Ling

by essexbuzzard, 12-Sep-18 10:29 PM GMT

Not seen many Nymphalids of any kind, actually...

Excellent garden Small Copper, though.

Re: Kev Ling

by Wurzel, 12-Sep-18 10:53 PM GMT

Here's a 🍷 for the garden Small Copper, something I never got when I had a garden. To make it worse my sister in-law bought the house we were renting and then when I went up one day to help clear out there were three in the garden 😞

Have a goodun

Wurzel

Re: Kev Ling

by David M, 13-Sep-18 10:33 AM GMT

kevlings wrote:

Thanks David, you're not the first to say that about Small Coopers and Buddleia. Although I have to say we are fortunate to get one or two sightings on ours each year. **Shame the same can't be said for Small Tortoiseshell and Painted Lady. Not a single example of each this in 2018. The first year ever**

That's a very worrying statistic, Kev. Even in my area, Small Tortoiseshells have been scarce this year (they're usually fairly common), although there HAS been a glut of Painted Ladies recently.